

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 22, 2011 – 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Pritchard, Steinfeld, Sherrard
Alternate members present: Zod, Fitzgerald
Absent: Munn, Roper, Kane
Staff present: Davis, Glemboski, Galetta

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. He sat Fitzgerald for Roper and Zod for Munn.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF meeting of 12/14/10.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 12/14/10 as amended.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Steinfeld. Motion passed 4-0-1, with Steinfeld abstaining.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 2/8/11 as written.

Motion made by Steinfeld, seconded by Zod. Motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Fitzgerald addressed the Commission regarding the school football fields and the discussion of whether to use artificial turf or natural turf. He read a letter for the record, which he addressed to the Town Manager.

IV. SUBDIVISIONS

1. Common Ground Subdivision Modification, Pumpkin Hill Road

Jim Chambers of Pequot Development Associates presented to the Commission regarding Common Ground which is a 3-lot subdivision. The owner, Donald Holloway, sold Lot #1 some time ago and it is currently under development. Chambers is purchasing Lots 2 and 3 and he is seeking a modification to allow overhead power lines from poles at the lot's frontage. The original subdivision showed underground service to the lots; however, Lot 1 already has overhead lines up to the subdivision then they run underground to the property. He has met with both CL&P and AT&T already and they are in favor of overhead power lines. They have proposed to set one pole on the power line side across from Pumpkin Hill Road and run overhead lines across to the development. Chambers stated this would be preferable to doing a road cut and trenching for underground lines. He noted that all the homes on that side of the street have over head lines so there is no reason for underground lines from an aesthetic point of view. The utility companies are ready to go and the lines could be run within 3 weeks.

Staff noted that this is a grey area in the subdivision regulations which they hope to have clarified. Currently the regulations call for underground utilities in a subdivision. Previously, poles have been allowed to bring power to the subdivisions and then the lines are installed underground. AT&T is responsible for putting up the poles and they will bring them in at no cost to the developer's frontage. If the Commission does not allow the modification then the developer must bear the cost of running the utilities under the road.

Chairman Sherrard expressed his disappointment that the utilities for Lot 1 were allowed to be brought in overhead.

Staff agreed that we need to do a better job collaborating and communicating internally. More detailed open space subdivisions will require more staff involvement. With regard to Lot 1, the waiver for underground utilities was denied but the process was circumnavigated when the owner went to the utility company. Staff noted that this can happen particularly with frontage subdivisions and flag lots. With the larger subdivisions there are preconstruction meetings and the building department is a part of these meetings. There was also a preexisting structure on Lot 1 so when the building permit was applied for it didn't raise flags that it might be part of a small subdivision.

Staff was asked about the bond for Holloway. The town still has a \$9,100 bond on deposit relating to the subdivision. The bond is for improvements such as trees, driveway apron and to move a stone wall on Lot 1.

MOTION: To approve the Common Ground Subdivision Modification to allow overhead utilities across Pumpkin Hill Road to the subdivision frontage on the east side of Pumpkin Hill Road, with the following modifications:

1. A new utility easement across Lot 2 in favor of Lot 3 shall be recorded prior to issuing a C.O. to Lots 2 or 3.
2. Erosion and sediment controls shall be provided for any new disturbance on the lots; and individual plot plans for the development of Lots 2 and 3 shall be reviewed and approved by the Office of Planning and Development prior to the issuance of building permits.
3. All staff technical items shall be addressed.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Steinfeld. Motion passed 4-0-1, with Zed abstaining.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Land Use Regulation Update Project

Staff noted that the objective of enclosing Section 4 in the agenda packet was not to engage in detailed wordsmithing but rather to get into the process of moving Section 4 along. The sections that the Commission should focus on have

legislative implications that can't be addressed by staff. If the Commissioners have input on other parts of regulation amendments they should contact OPDS. Staff gave an overview of the sections which appear to require the most attention.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Report of Commission

Commissioner Steinfeld gave an update on the Noank School Reuse Taskforce meeting he attended on February 17. The motion to tear down the building was rescinded. The issue may be revisited again. The taskforce is in the process of creating a survey which will be sent out to 100% of the population within a bubble around the school, to scattered addresses throughout Noank, and to some residents of the Town. It may be posted on the Town website for citizens to see and respond. The next meeting is scheduled for March 3.

Commissioner Steinfeld also noted that handouts had been provided by staff with registration information regarding the CFPZA Annual Meeting at the Aqua Turf in Southington on March 24, 2011.

Chairman Sherrard asked about the March agenda. Staff noted that the first meeting may not have any new applications. The Commission may hold the meeting in any event and use it as a working meeting to discuss revision of subdivision regulations.

2. New Applications

a. None

VIII. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

Chairman Sherrard noted that Commissioner Fitzgerald will be gone until April.

Chairman Sherrard noted that he had received a phone call from a member of the RTM who was concerned that the Planning Commission referral was in favor of the Phase II School Committee recommendation. He thought the referral was very clear and did not constitute "approval" of the project. He talked with Mike Murphy to discuss how the referral could have been so misunderstood. He is concerned about how the RTM is given information and who presents the material. Mike Murphy is following up on this matter for him.

Staff noted that a verbatim motion and vote are transmitted to the Town Manager's office to be sent to the Town Council.

IX. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff noted that handouts were provided about the CFTZA Annual Meeting and any commissioners who are interested in attending should contact Deb Gilot at the OPDS office.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:31 p.m. made by Pritchard, seconded by Zod, so voted unanimously.

Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary
Planning Commission

Prepared by Lynda Galetta
Office Assistant II